



# SCA Code of **Ethics**

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This **Code of Ethics** has been developed across all jurisdictions where SCA members operate in Australia and New Zealand. Members are expected to uphold these ethical principles consistent with the regulatory and legal frameworks applicable to their role and location.

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## Ethical Principles and Standards for SCA Members

The Strata Community Association (SCA) Code of Ethics (The Code) outlines the ethical principles and professional standards expected of members operating within the strata sector. It provides a framework for ensuring integrity, accountability, fairness, and respect in the delivery of services and the management of strata communities. The Code supports consistent decision-making, promotes ethical conduct, and reinforces public confidence in the professionalism of the strata industry.

### 1. Ethical Stewardship

Act with loyalty, good faith, and due care, always prioritising the interests of the strata community over personal or third-party interests.

### 2. Compliance with Law and Regulation

Educate and guide the committee and strata community to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, regulations, and laws. Uphold the integrity of the profession by complying with applicable law and consumer protections.

### 3. Transparency and Disclosure

Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, including commissions, referral fees, any form of payment or benefit received or relationships with service providers.

### 4. Integrity and Honesty

Act truthfully and ethically in all professional dealings. Do not mislead, withhold material facts - particularly for personal or financial gain - or engage in any conduct that undermines trust or damages professional credibility.

### 5. Fairness and Impartiality

Treat all parties with consistency and respect. Avoid bias or favouritism, especially in dispute resolution or decision-making.

### 6. Confidentiality and Privacy

Protect the confidentiality of the strata community and owner information. Handle personal and financial data in compliance with the law and professional duties.

### 7. Competence and Diligence

Maintain professional knowledge, and perform duties with due skill, care, and attention. Avoid taking on work beyond your competence or authority.

### 8. Respectful Communication and Conduct

Maintain professional conduct at all times and avoid behaviour that is denigrating, disrespectful, discriminatory, or disruptive to all stakeholders.

### 9. Service to the Strata Community

Act in a manner that guides and supports committees and the strata community in enabling long-term health, harmony, and sustainability of strata communities, upholding legal obligations with social responsibility.

### 10. Upholding Reputation and Interests

Act consistently with SCA's professional expectations, promoting confidence in the profession, and avoiding conduct that will bring the strata management profession into disrepute.

**All practices must comply with relevant legislative obligations and be consistent with mandated and endorsed SCA best practice standards and guidelines.**

## Introduction

The Strata Community Association is committed to setting the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, and transparency in the strata management sector. In addition to a comprehensive review of best-practice professional standards across Australia, this Code of Ethics is the result of extensive consultation, including survey feedback from strata management company principals, strata community managers, executive and support staff, service providers and lot owners. It is designed to address real-world challenges and expectations identified by our community, and foster a culture of trust, accountability, and continuous improvement, which will ultimately strengthen and reinforce consumer and public confidence in the strata management sector.

By adhering to this Code, SCA members pledge to uphold not only legal requirements but also the spirit of integrity, transparency, fairness, and service that underpins the strata profession. All individual members are accountable for their own conduct, while the Principal of the business is also responsible for the conduct of their employees.



# Core Ethical Principles

## 1. Ethical Stewardship

Strata community managers, are entrusted with responsibilities that affect the collective interests of strata communities. They must act with loyalty, care and sound judgement, ensuring their decisions and actions serve the best interests of the client entity, without influence from personal, commercial, or third-party interests.

Members must:

- Act in good faith, with transparency and impartiality.
- Avoid actual or potential conflicts of interest.
- Not act against the interests of the strata community.
- Refrain from using any professional position for personal gain or to benefit related parties.
- Disclose and appropriately manage any circumstances that will compromise the best interests of the strata community.
- Use delegated authority strictly in accordance with contractual, legislative, and ethical boundaries.
- Ensure procurement decisions are based on merit and value, with clear, auditable criteria and direct committee involvement. Incentive-driven arrangements are discouraged unless fully disclosed and approved by the relevant decision-making body prior to engagement.

This duty includes the responsible management of community assets, impartial decision-making, and appropriate use of delegated authority. Ethical stewardship goes beyond legal compliance, requiring a higher standard of conduct where the law is non-descriptive or silent.

## 2. Compliance with Laws and Regulation

Compliance with all applicable legislation, regulations, and laws is a fundamental ethical obligation. Members must operate within the legal frameworks governing strata and community title management and ensure that conduct reflects both the letter and spirit of the law. Compliance is essential to protecting consumers, maintaining trust, and upholding the integrity of the profession.

Members must:

- Remain informed of relevant legislation, including strata, property, tenancy, privacy, and consumer protection law.
- Ensure that all actions, general advice, and documentation provided to strata communities and committees comply with legal requirements.
- Promptly address any breaches of legislation, regulation, or contractual obligations.
- Cooperate with regulatory authorities and meet statutory reporting and disclosure obligations.
- Promote awareness of legal responsibilities within professional teams and among stakeholders.

Adherence to legal obligations reinforces ethical practice and ensure that professional responsibilities are carried out with diligence, transparency, and accountability.



### 3. Transparency and Disclosure

This core ethical obligation supports informed decision-making, strengthens accountability, and reinforces trust within the strata sector. It requires the proactive, clear, and timely disclosure of all information that will influence confidence in decision-making processes or professional conduct.

Members must:

- Disclose all actual or potential conflicts of interest and financial value, including commissions, incentives, related business entities, referral arrangements, and relationships with suppliers, contractors, or service providers. Ensure consent by the strata community is obtained before proceeding.
- Ensure disclosures are presented in plain language, using standardised templates where available and provided before decisions are made.
- Provide sufficient and timely information to enable lot owners and committees to make informed decisions.
- Seek informed written consent prior to acting where a conflict may exist or where financial interests are involved.

- Avoid any conduct that could result in secrecy, confusion, or perceptions of undue influence, bias, or preferential treatment.
- Maintain accurate records of all disclosures and related consents and make these available to the strata community or committee upon request.

Transparent conduct is essential to ethical governance and must be applied consistently across all professional relationships and service arrangements within the strata sector.

#### 4. Integrity and Honesty

Integrity and honesty are the foundations of ethical and professional conduct within the strata sector. It requires truthfulness, reliability, and adherence to legal and ethical obligations, even in complex or high-pressure situations. Conduct must be guided by honesty, transparency, and a commitment to maintaining public trust in the profession and the broader community.

Members must:

- Act truthfully in all professional dealings and communications, ensuring that information is accurate, complete, and not misleading.
- Not engage in the falsification, misrepresentation, or intentional concealment of material facts relevant to decision-making.
- Ensure all marketing, reporting, and communications uphold standards of accuracy and fairness.
- Take responsibility for errors and implement corrective action in a timely and transparent manner.
- Uphold a professional reputation for ethical conduct, reliability, and principled leadership.

Maintain personal integrity even when organisational directives, commercial pressures or workplace culture conflict with this Code. When such conflicts arise, seek guidance and raise concerns.

#### 5. Fairness and Impartiality

Fairness and impartiality are essential to ethical decision-making and maintaining confidence in the integrity of the strata sector. Professional conduct must be free from bias, discrimination, or favouritism, particularly in matters involving procurement, dispute resolution, and committee engagement.

Members must:

- Treat all parties, owners, committees, residents, and service providers with consistency, respect, and equity.
- Avoid any conduct that may suggest bias, including preferential treatment based on familiarity, status, or personal views.
- Facilitate transparent and impartial processes for procurement, supplier selection, and contract recommendations.
- Manage disputes objectively and support fair, balanced outcomes for all parties involved.
- Uphold procedural fairness in communications, reporting, and the implementation of decisions in accordance with legislation.
- Exercise authority responsibly, avoiding undue pressure or exploitation and remaining mindful of power imbalances.

Impartial conduct supports trust in the decision-making process, ensures equitable treatment of stakeholders, and reinforces the professional standing of the strata sector.



## 6. Confidentiality and Privacy

Confidentiality is a core professional obligation and must be maintained at all times in accordance with applicable laws and ethical standards. Information obtained in the course of professional duties must be handled with discretion and protected from unauthorised access, use, or disclosure, even after the conclusion of a professional relationship.

Members must:

- Use secure systems and processes to protect personal, financial, and sensitive data.
- Use confidential and personal information solely for the purpose of which it was provided.
- Disclose confidential information only when properly authorised or legally required.
- Ensure that staff, contractors, and third-party service providers understand and uphold privacy obligations.
- Avoid any use of confidential information for personal benefit or to the detriment of others.
- Not use records belonging to a strata community after the agency relationship is ended.

Copies may only be retained where reasonably necessary for lawful purposes, including compliance, dispute resolution, or regulatory obligations, and must be held securely and not used for any other purpose. Any assistance provided following termination must be appropriate, limited, and consistent with the authority of the strata community or its appointed manager.

Upholding confidentiality supports legal compliance, safeguards individual rights, and reinforces respect, trust, and professionalism within the strata sector.

## 7. Competence and Diligence

Competence and diligence are ethical obligations that support trust, accountability, and responsible professional conduct. Ethical competence involves maintaining the knowledge, judgement, and care necessary to act in the best interests of strata community and the broader community.

While operational performance relates to how well services are delivered, including timeliness, responsiveness, and administrative accuracy, ethical competence refers to the obligation to act within the limits of one's expertise, to maintain up-to-date knowledge, and to exercise sound judgement in fulfilling professional responsibilities.

Members must:

- Accept responsibility only for tasks within delegation noted in the contract and within the bounds of their professional competence and experience.
- Maintain current knowledge of legislation, professional standards, and sector developments.
- Apply sound judgement and due care in all professional activities.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the quality and reliability of services delivered under their direction.
- Commit to ongoing learning and development as part of ethical professional practice.

Acting with competence and diligence ensures that professional duties are carried out with integrity and in a manner that protects the interests of owners, committees, and the sector as a whole.



## 8. Respectful Communication and Conduct

Respectful communication is a core aspect of professionalism and ethical conduct in the strata sector. Interactions with stakeholders must reflect courtesy, integrity, and an awareness of the diverse perspectives within strata communities. Poor communication and disrespectful behaviour undermine trust, escalate conflict, and disrupt community cohesion.

Members must:

- Communicate clearly, courteously, and without aggression, sarcasm, or intimidation, or dismissiveness - even in high-pressure situations.
- Use respectful and professional language at all times, avoiding conduct that a reasonable person would consider offensive, threatening, or inappropriate.
- Maintain professionalism and appropriate tone across all communication channels, including written, verbal, and digital formats.

- Contribute to a culture of civility, constructive dialogue, and mutual respect among owners, residents, committees, and service providers.
- Not induce or attempt to induce a breach of contract between a strata community and its Strata Community Manager.
- Disclose their name, their company and their reason for attendance if a member attends a meeting of a strata community managed by another member.

Members must communicate and behave in a manner that upholds the dignity, fairness, and wellbeing of others. Such behaviour fosters an environment where individuals feel respected, supported, and free to express their views, raise concerns, and participate without fear of criticism or reprisal. Respectful conduct supports ethical dispute resolution, strengthens community trust, and reflects the high standards expected of the profession.

## 9. Service to the Strata Community

Ethical service to the strata community requires impartiality, professionalism, and consistency in all interactions. Members must treat all stakeholders and each other equitably, regardless of role, relationship, or individual views. Actions must reflect the collective interests of the community and support transparent, inclusive governance.

Members must:

- Act in the best interests of strata communities as a whole.
- Avoid preferential treatment or undue influence by any individual or group.
- Communicate consistently, openly, and without favouritism.
- Maintain professional boundaries and manage conflicts of interest appropriately.
- Foster a culture of inclusion, procedural fairness, and mutual respect within the community.

Providing ethical service to the strata community upholds trust, supports good governance, and affirms the professional responsibilities of all members.

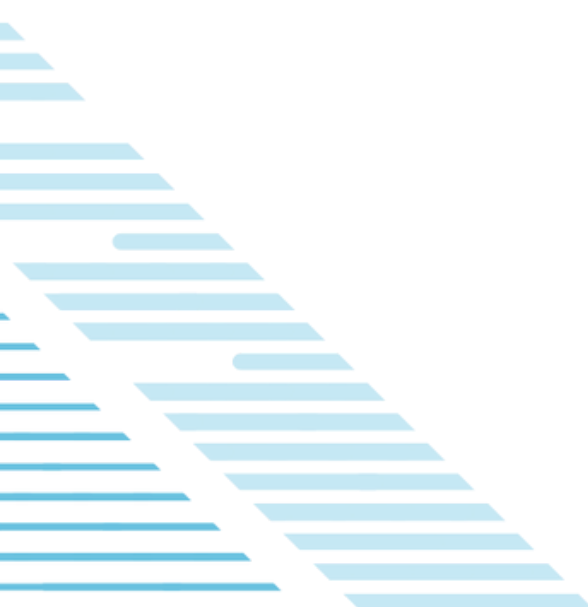
## 10. Upholding the Reputation and Interests of the Profession

Membership of SCA carries a professional obligation to uphold the credibility, values, and integrity of both the organisation and the strata management profession. Conduct should aim to build trust in the sector and encourage ethical and professional standards.

Members must:

- Represent the profession with professionalism and integrity across all settings, including public, private, and online environments.
- Avoid conduct, whether lawful or otherwise, that will place the strata management profession into disrepute.
- Maintain fair, transparent, and sustainable pricing models that reflect the complexity, expertise, and professional standards required of strata managers, supporting long-term viability and reinforcing the industry's status as a trusted and respected profession.
- Support practices and initiatives that promote the advancement, recognition, and ethical development of the strata industry.
- Take proactive steps to uphold the integrity of the profession, including reporting serious breaches of this Code or other conduct that will bring the industry into disrepute.

Upholding the reputation and interests of SCA reinforces the collective credibility of the profession and helps secure a strong, respected voice for the strata sector.



## Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The Code of Ethics is intended to evolve alongside the strata sector, supporting ongoing professionalism, ethical consistency, and community trust. Its implementation reflects a commitment to continuous improvement, responsive governance, and sector-wide accountability.

SCA will maintain oversight mechanisms such as compliance reviews, audits, and peer evaluations to support adherence to the Code. These mechanisms will be periodically reviewed and refined in consultation with members and stakeholders to ensure they remain effective, transparent, and aligned with public expectations.

This Code will be formally reviewed every two years, or more frequently if required, to ensure alignment with legislative changes, industry standards, and emerging ethical considerations.

## Implementation and Enforcement

To ensure the effectiveness of this Code, SCA has established clear mechanisms for ethical decision-making, reporting, investigation, and accountability. These processes are designed to support professional integrity, procedural fairness, and sector-wide trust.

### Ethical Decision-Making Framework

Members can apply the SCA Ethical Decision-Making Framework as a guide when navigating complex or uncertain circumstances. This framework supports sound professional judgement.

### Reporting and Whistleblower Protections

SCA maintains a culture in which ethical concerns can be raised without fear of reprisal. Members, staff, and stakeholders are encouraged to report suspected breaches through established and confidential reporting channels. Whistleblower protections apply, and all reports are handled with fairness, discretion, and seriousness.

### Investigation and Adjudication

All reported breaches will be managed in accordance with the SCA Complaints Management Process (CMP). Investigations will be conducted impartially, with independent expertise engaged where necessary. All parties will be given the opportunity to respond, and outcomes will be based on the evidence and principles set out in this Code.

Members must comply with the SCA CMP and participate in good faith in any complaint, investigation, or disciplinary matter, including providing timely, accurate, and honest responses to all requests for information, whether the matter concerns themselves or another member.

### Corrective Actions and Sanctions

Where a breach is substantiated, SCA may impose corrective actions such as, but not limited to, targeted education, mentoring, or the adoption of specific best practices. These actions are intended to address the underlying causes of the conduct and assist members in meeting their ethical obligations.

For serious or repeated breaches, sanctions may include removal of accreditation, suspension or expulsion of membership. The severity of any sanction will be proportionate to the nature and impact of the conduct.

## Stakeholder Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Key Ethical Expectations
Strata Community Managers	Act as fiduciary, disclose conflicts, declare commissions or other benefits, ensure financial transparency, remain impartial in disputes
Service Providers	Provide quality services at fair prices, avoid collusive behaviour, declare commissions or benefits

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Accountability	Being answerable for professional conduct, accepting responsibility and complying with standards
Commission	Any payment, gift or benefit received as a result of recommending or engaging a supplier/service
Conflicts of Interest	Any situation where personal, financial or other interests could improperly influence judgement
Disclosure	Making information (fees, commissions, conflicts) known in a clear timely and accessible way
Discrimination	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected attributes
Fiduciary	Obligation to act in the best interests of another party with loyalty and due care
Informed Written Consent	Providing an individual with clear, accurate and sufficient information to understand the nature, purpose and potential consequences of the decision or action being authorised
Procurement	The process of sourcing and selecting goods and/or services
Service Provider	Any external party engaged to provide goods or services to the owners corporation
Strata Community	The legal entity comprising all lot owners in a strata scheme, responsible for common property. Also known as Body Corporate, Community Corporation, Owners Corporation, Strata Company, Strata Corporation
Strata Community Manager	A professional appointed to manage the operations, finances, and compliance of the scheme. Also known as Body Corporate Manager, Owners Corporation Manager and Strata Managing Agent
Transparency	Providing clear, open information about services, fees and decisions
Whistleblower	An individual reporting suspected unethical conduct, protected from retaliation